



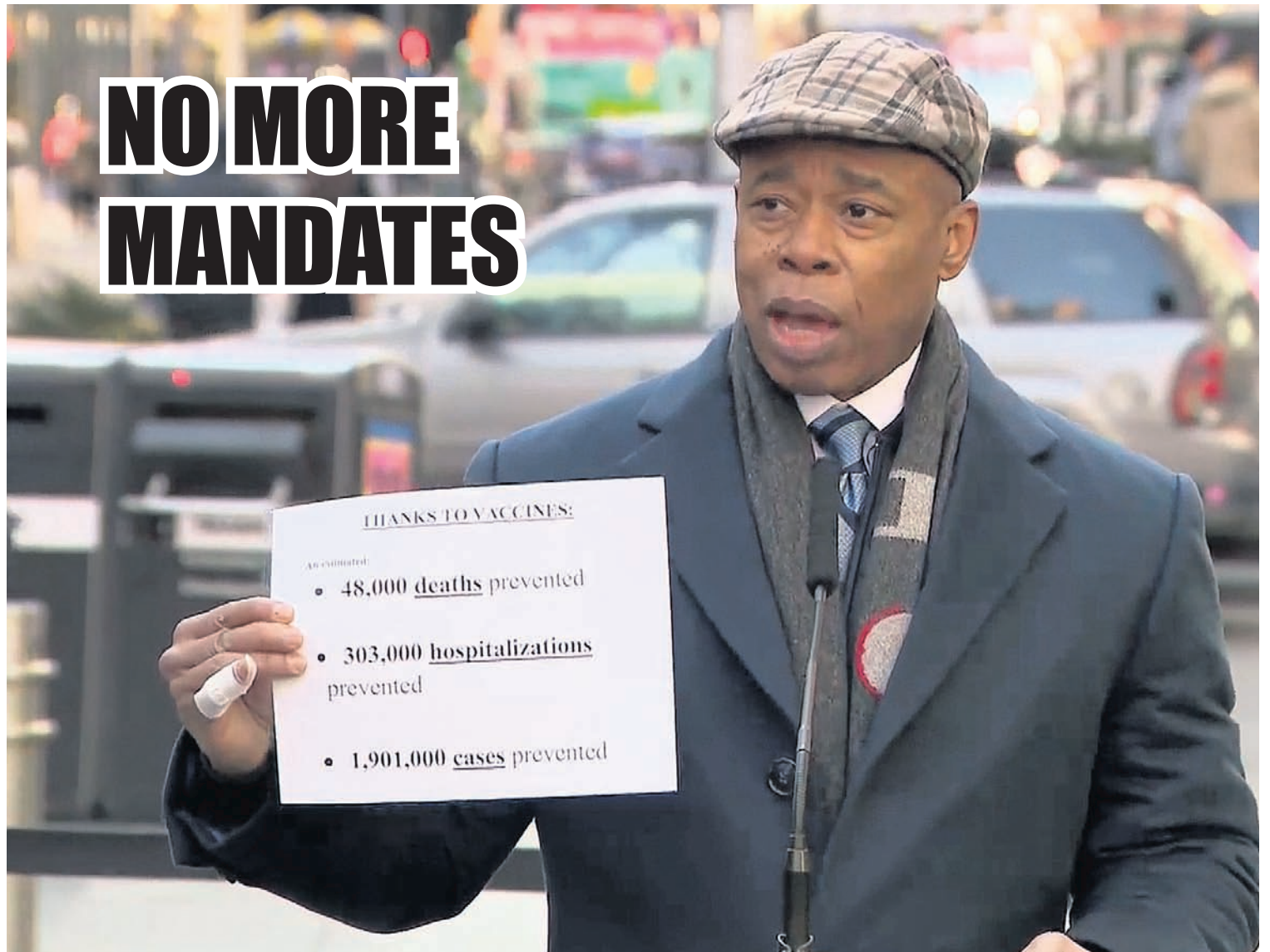
Big cities drop more COVID-19 measures in push for normalcy

By MICHELLE L. PRICE

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City and Los Angeles are lifting some of their strictest COVID-19 prevention measures as officials in big cities around the U.S. push for a return to normalcy after two grueling years of the pandemic.

New York City, which has long prided itself as having the nation's toughest COVID-19 safety protocols, will do away with several of its mandates next week, including required masking in public schools and vaccination requirements at restaurants, entertainment and cultural venues, the mayor announced Friday. On the other side of the country, residents in Los Angeles County were no longer required as of Friday to wear masks at restaurants, bars, gyms, shops and other businesses, though the city of Los Angeles is still requiring many indoor businesses to verify that their patrons are fully vaccinated.



New York City mayor Eric Adams speaks during a news conference in which he announced the scaling back of COVID-19 mask and vaccine mandates within the city, Friday, March 4, 2022, in New York.

Continued on next page

Associated Press

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
TICO KOCK STEEL DRUM 4 - 6pm	ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	CARLOS ORLATE SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	RICKY THOMAS GUITAR 7 - 9pm	ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

Happy Hour
12 - 1 / 4 - 6 / 9 - 10

PREMIUM
BRANDS

KARAOKE
HAPPY HOUR
9:00 - 11:00pm

costa linda
beach resort

WATER'S EDGE
RESTAURANT & BAR

Tel +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106 | Reservations at wateredge-aruba.com | Elegant dining, spectacular ocean views enjoyed al fresco or in air conditioned comfort | Located at Costa Linda Beach Resort

Fit2fly COVID-19
Testing Center

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED!

NAAT (Abott ID):
Result in 30 minutes!

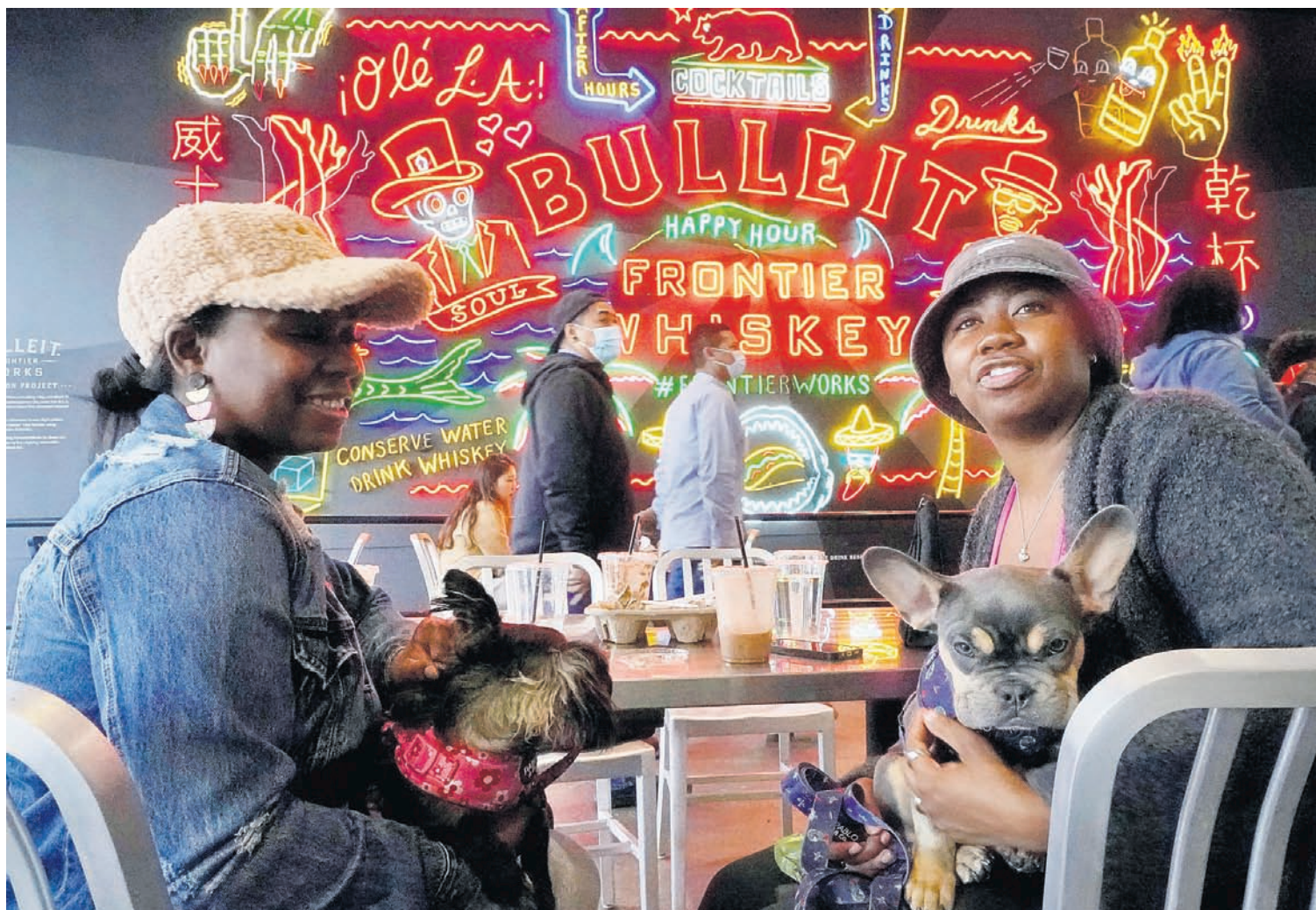
PCR / Antigen Test
SAME DAY RESULT!

LABORATORIO DI SERVIZIO

MedCare Clinic
URGENT CARE

Tel: (+297) 280-0630
info@medcare.aw / www.medcare.aw

Locations: **The Cove Mall** (8:00 AM - 6:00 PM) **Medcare near Courtyard by Marriott** (8:00 AM - 2:00 PM)



Patrons Fe Copper with "Lucky," left, and friend Ria Patterson with "Gianni" drink coffee at the Grand Central Los Angeles in Los Angeles Friday, March 4, 2022.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

The moves to ease the mandates comes as government officials around the U.S. have been easing COVID-19 guidelines and signaling that the risk of virus spread is retreating — at least for now.

Illinois lifted face mask requirements for many indoor spaces on Monday, and Boston will lift similar rules on Saturday. Chicago stopped requiring proof of vaccination to dine in restaurants. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said last week that most Americans can now safely take a break from wearing masks, including students.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams, declaring it was time to "celebrate" as he stood in Times Square on Friday, said the city needed to recover and that "we are not going to allow CO-

VID to define us."

"We're far from out of the woods. COVID is still here. But we are beating it back," Adams said.

He invited "people from Canada, from Arkansas, from New Zealand, from anywhere else," to visit and spend money and implored New Yorkers to "go out this weekend and go dine."

The Democratic mayor said he was confident that it would be safe, starting Monday, to send children and teachers to school unmasked and no longer require some businesses to check guests' vaccine cards.

The decision to ease rules in Los Angeles County aligns with new California guidelines unveiled allowing vaccinated or unvaccinated people to choose to go without face coverings in most places.

Masks are still required in all K-12 school districts until March 12. After that, districts may maintain their own mask requirements. Business owners also can choose to require masks for customers and employees. At Coffee Fix in the Studio City neighborhood of Los Angeles, owner Tae Kim said the change in masking rules has been a bit confusing for customers.

One customer Taylor Lewis, who was wearing her mask, said it was "so nice seeing people's faces" but she would continue to wear her mask out of habit in indoor places.

"With the ever-changing facts that are given to us I see the good in wearing it," she said.

In New York City, the elimination of the school mask requirement is a striking turnaround from just a few months ago, when some

parents and teachers were agitating for a return to remote learning as the omicron wave swept through schools and attendance plummeted.

The teachers union said Friday it supports the move to lift the rule.

Children under age 5 would still have to wear masks because they are not eligible for the vaccine.

The city's vaccine mandate, imposed last year in a program called Key2NYC, required New Yorkers and tourists to show proof of vaccination to enter restaurants and bars, work out in gyms, catch a movie, attend a Broadway show, go to a convention or visit a museum.

Not all of those places are ready to drop the restrictions. The Broadway League has said it will maintain mask and vaccination requirements in all its theaters at least through April 30. Andrew Rigie, the executive director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance representing restaurants, bars and nightclubs, said Friday that he thinks few venues will continue to impose vaccine rules on their own because

their staff had to enforce the rules with customers and, at times, weather their frustrations.

"Regardless of what someone's opinion is of the vaccination requirement, it's put restaurant workers in an extraordinarily difficult position," he said. "We hoped that people would respect workers but it's been really tough."

The rules also barred star Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving from playing home games with the team. But Adams said that he plans to preserve a rule requiring private employers to ensure their workers are vaccinated, which would apply to Irving.

By lifting the Key2NYC rule, Irving would be allowed to attend the Nets' home games as a spectator but not play.

Recently, New York City has been averaging just under 680 new coronavirus cases and 25 deaths each day, down from nearly 41,000 new cases and nearly 130 deaths per day at the height of the omicron wave in January.

The virus continues to hospitalize and kill New Yorkers with greater frequency now than it did last summer and through much of the fall, when many of the vaccination and school masking rules were imposed.

Around 4,000 city residents have died of the virus since Jan. 1, more than in the previous nine months combined.

Not everyone agreed with the move.

The city's public advocate Jumaane Williams, who served as an elected ombudsman, called it "unnecessary and unwise" to remove the vaccine requirement while lifting other rules and people needed to feel safe.

Adams, responding to critics on Friday, said "there's no decision you can make in New York that you're going to get 100% of New Yorkers" to agree with.

He said some people may be reluctant to dine out without vaccine rules but said he thinks most New Yorkers are ready.

"We are all right, folks," Adams said. "We're doing the right things." □



White House disavows Graham's call for Putin assassination

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
WASHINGTON (AP) —

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham is facing intense push-back from all corners of Washington after calling for the Russian people to end the Ukraine war by assassinating President Vladimir Putin. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Friday that it is "not the position of the United States government."

Graham, a former Air Force lawyer and longtime defense hawk, tweeted Thursday evening that "the only people who can fix this" are Russians.

"The only way this ends is for somebody in Russia to take this guy out," Graham tweeted. "You would be doing your country - and the world - a great service." The tweet drew swift push-back from some of the most conservative and liberal members of Congress. Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz called it "an exceptionally bad idea." Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican who was denounced this week for speaking at an event organized by a white nationalist, said Graham's tweet was "irresponsible, dangerous & unhinged." And Min-



Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., right, with Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., speaks about their bill to ban Russian energy imports, Thursday, March 3, 2022, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

nesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, a Democrat who has faced criticism over comments about Israel, tweeted: "Seriously, wtf?"

On Friday, Psaki dismissed Graham's idea out of hand. "That is not the position of the United States government and certainly not a statement you'd hear come from the mouth of anybody working in this ad-

ministration," she said.

Graham's comment comes at a fraught time for the White House, which is orchestrating a tough Western response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine while trying to avoid a direct confrontation with Russia for fear of triggering a broader war. The Russian president's raising of the alert level on his country's nuclear weap-

ons stirred fears that he may be willing to consider the unthinkable step of using them.

The U.S. has ruled out sending troops to Ukraine and hasn't agreed to a no-fly zone over Ukraine that could lead to clashes with Russian warplanes.

With no letup in the war, the White House has asked Congress for \$10 billion in

emergency funding, with money going toward humanitarian aid and security needs. Approval could come as soon as next week. Lawmakers are also pushing the Biden administration to halt oil imports from Russia, a move that could tighten the vise on the country's increasingly isolated economy.

But Graham is alone in encouraging attempts on Putin's life. Russia's ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, called his comments "unacceptable and outrageous."

Graham was unbowed in a Fox News appearance Friday morning, saying that the best way for the fighting to end is to have "an Elliot Ness or Wyatt Earp" in Russia, referring to fabled American law enforcement figures.

"I am convinced this is a one man problem surrounded by a few people," Graham said.

Also Friday, Graham introduced a resolution with Democratic Sens. Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen that calls for Putin to be held accountable for his actions in Ukraine, including investigations of war crimes. □

Clinton Global Initiative restarted to tackle urgent needs

By GLENN GAMBOA
AP Business Writer

The Clinton Foundation is planning another Clinton Global Initiative — a high-profile gathering of business, political and philanthropic leaders — this September in New York, according to a letter former President Bill Clinton sent to the foundation's supporters Friday.

The initiative, which began meeting annually in 2005 and boasted speakers ranging from former presidents Barack Obama and Jimmy Carter to celebrity philanthropists like Bono and Ben Affleck, ended in 2016 during former Sen. Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, when questions were raised about the appearance of potential conflicts of interests if donors

then had business before Hillary Clinton's administration.

Bill Clinton said he wants to bring back the initiative because the kind of "cooperation and coordination" it created is urgently needed. "The COVID-19 pandemic has ripped the cover off of longstanding inequities and vulnerabilities across our global community," Bill Clinton wrote in the letter Friday. "The existential threat of climate change grows every day. Democracy is under assault around the world, most glaringly in Ukraine where Russia has launched an unjustified and unprovoked invasion that has put millions of lives in grave danger."

Clinton said the meeting, which will coincide with the

United Nations General Assembly in September, will likely look different than it has in the past, perhaps in reference to new health and security concerns. However, he hopes the spirit of cooperation it fostered will return.

"It seems that all across the globe, people are pulling away from those who are different from them—putting our future at greater risk and making it harder to solve the challenges and seize the opportunities in front of us."

According to the foundation, more than 3,700 projects and partnerships resulted from the Clinton Global Initiative, making a difference in the lives of more than 435 million people in over 180 countries.

"While the challenges our



Former President Bill Clinton attends the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation (JBJSF) benefit gala, celebrating ten years of combating hunger and homelessness, at The Garage on Thursday, Oct. 6, 2016, in New York.

Associated Press

world faces today are steep, CGI has always been about what we can do, not what we can't do," Clinton wrote. "And by bringing di-

verse partners together to take action and achieve real results, we can create a culture of possibility in a world hungry for hope." □

Police: Student shoots, wounds 2 at Kansas high school

By **HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH**

Associated Press

OLATHE, Kan. (AP) — A student shot and wounded an administrator and a school resource officer Friday at a suburban Kansas City high school, and the student also was wounded when the officer returned fire, authorities said.

The male student at Olathe East High School was taken into custody, Olathe police Sgt. Joel Yeldell said, and all three are expected to survive. No other students were injured, he said. Police have not identified the suspect.

Yeldell said the school resource officer notified dispatch over the radio just after 10:30 a.m. that he and an administrator had been shot and wounded by a student in the office. The resource officer said he returned fire, according to Yeldell, shooting and wounding the student. Yeldell did not provide additional information on what prompted the shooting.

"The good news is that no students were injured," Yeldell said at a news conference. "We have an SRO



Students from Olathe East High school are led off busses to reunite with their parents Friday, March 4, 2022, at Pioneer Trail Middle School in Olathe, Kan., after a shooting at the high school.

Associated Press

it sounds like that did his job so that's great news and the injuries are expected to be survivable."

Yeldell said the student is an adult. The county prosecutor's office declined to comment Friday on potential charges.

Overland Park Regional Medical Center said in a statement that one of the three people wounded is in critical condition, and a second is in critical but sta-

ble condition. The third person is in stable condition. The statement said that all of the families are requesting privacy.

Susan Burgett told The Associated Press she was panicked when she heard about a shooting at the school of her 16-year-old daughter, Emerson Burgett. Her daughter texted immediately to tell her she was safe.

"The first thought was to

panic and imagine that there is a shooter in the hallway and kids screaming but that wasn't what happened thank God," she said while waiting to be reunited with her at the staging site.

"That is just what we are used to seeing. There are so many shootings all the time that it is such a sad reality that this is what we have to live with."

She said her husband was

concerned their daughter would have a panic attack but she didn't think that would happen because "the kids just expect this. They hear about it all the time."

"It's terrifying but at the same time I want to see my child. That is the main thing."

Agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives were on the scene to help with the investigation. No information was immediately available on the type of firearm used, said John Ham, a spokesman for the ATF in Kansas City. He added that police would release those details when they are available.

Olathe Public Schools said in a tweet that Olathe East High School, which has an enrollment of 1,900, was put on lockdown after the shooting.

"Please know that law enforcement is on site and the building is secured," the district said.

Parents were being directed to a nearby Family Video store and Frontier Park to be reunited with their children. Police asked parents and the public to stay away from the school. □

California family 'appalled' by arrest in faked abduction



In this Nov. 10, 2016, file photo, a "missing" sign for Mountain Gate, Calif., resident Sherri Papini, is seen along Sunrise Drive, near the location where the mom of two is believed to have gone missing while on an afternoon jog.

Associated Press

By **DON THOMPSON**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— The family of a Northern California woman whose 2016 disappearance

triggered an intensive search and international headlines on Friday criticized the way she was arrested on charges she faked her own kid-

napping.

Sherri Papini, 39, of Redding, was "ambushed" in front of her children Thursday afternoon, according to her family. She spent the night in the Sacramento County jail awaiting her first appearance on charges of mail fraud and lying to a federal agent.

Papini disappeared while jogging in 2016. She turned up three weeks later, on Thanksgiving Day, alongside a highway about 150 miles (241 kilometers) from her home. She had a "brand" on her right shoulder along with burns and bruises.

She described in great detail to police her abduction at gunpoint and abusive treatment by two "Hispanic women," triggering a hunt for her abductors. It was all

a lie, authorities said Thursday. She actually was with a former boyfriend in Southern California, they said, and beat herself up to support her fabrication.

Her family's statement did not address the veracity of the charges but said the family is "confused by several aspects" of the counts. They also criticized how she was taken into custody.

"We love Sherri and are appalled by the way in which law enforcement ambushed her (Thursday) afternoon in a dramatic and unnecessary manner in front of her children," the family said in the statement released through a publicist.

She would have come to the police station if asked, the family said, "where this could have been handled

in a more appropriate way."

Papini and her husband, Keith, have cooperated with investigators' requests, the family said, "despite repeated attempts to unnecessarily pit them against each other, empty threats to publicly embarrass them and other conduct that was less than professional." Neither the publicist nor prosecutors knew whether she had an attorney to represent her.

The FBI and U.S. attorney's office in Sacramento declined to comment, while the Shasta County Sheriff's Office did not immediately comment but previously said it would have nothing more to say now that charges have been filed. All three agencies investigated the case. □

Russian lawmakers approve prison for 'fake' war reports

By **JAMES ELLINGWORTH**
DUSSELDORF, Germany

(AP) — Russians could face prison sentences of up to 15 years for spreading information that goes against the Russian government's position on the war in Ukraine, a move that comes as authorities block access to foreign media outlets.

The Russian parliament voted unanimously Friday to approve a draft law criminalizing the intentional spreading of what Russia deems to be "fake" reports. Russian authorities have repeatedly decried reports of Russian military setbacks or civilian deaths in Ukraine as "fake" reports. State media outlets refer to Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a "special military operation" rather than a "war" or "invasion."

The draft law was approved by the lower and upper houses of parliament in quick succession and is now set to be signed into law by President Vladimir Putin to take effect as soon as Saturday, the speaker of the lower house, Vyacheslav Volodin, said.

"It is possible that by tomorrow, its rules will force those lied and made statements discrediting our armed forces to bear very grave punishment," Volodin said. "I want everyone to understand, and for society to



The BBC sign outside the entrance to the headquarters of the publicly funded media organisation in London, July 19, 2017.

understand, that we are doing this to protect our soldiers and officers, and to protect the truth."

The BBC said Friday it was temporarily stopping the work of all its journalists and support staff in Russia while it assessed the implications of the new law.

BBC Director-General Tim Davie said the legislation "appears to criminalize the process of independent journalism."

"The safety of our staff is paramount and we are not prepared to expose them to the risk of criminal prosecution simply for doing their jobs," he said.

Davie said the BBC's Russian-language news service would continue to operate from outside Russia.

The law envisages sentences of up to three years or fines for spreading what authorities deem to be false news about the military, but the maximum punishment rises to 15 years for cases deemed to have led to "severe consequences," the lower house of parliament said.

The kind of material which faces official disapproval was made clear Friday as the communications regulator, Roskomnadzor, said it was blocking five media or-

ganizations based abroad which publish news in Russian.

They had published "false information," the regulator said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies, on subjects including "the methods of carrying out combat activities (attacks on the civilian population, strikes on civil infrastructure objects), the numbers of losses of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and victims among the civilian population."

The blocks affect the BBC, the U.S. government-funded Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio

Liberty, German broadcaster Deutsche Welle and Latvia-based website Meduza. Together, they are among the most influential and often critical foreign media publishing in Russian. As of early afternoon in Moscow, the BBC website showed a message from Roskomnadzor that it had been blocked. Radio Free Europe Russian-language content was not reachable, but Voice of America content remained accessible.

The BBC posted instructions on Twitter about how Russian readers could work around the block by using apps or the "dark web."

"Access to accurate, independent information is a fundamental human right which should not be denied to the people of Russia, millions of whom rely on BBC News every week. We will continue our efforts to make BBC News available in Russia, and across the rest of the world," the BBC said.

Earlier this week the BBC said it was bringing back shortwave radio transmission to Ukraine and parts of Russia so people can listen to its programs with basic equipment.

Some well-known media outlets within Russia have chosen to close rather than face heavy restrictions on what they can report. □

Associated Press

U.S. to resume some visa services in Cuba after 4-year break

By **ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ**
Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — The U.S. government announced Thursday that it would resume limited processing of immigrant visas in Havana more than four years after halting that service and removing most diplomats from Cuba over suspicions they had been targeted for mysterious attacks.

The Havana embassy's chargé d'affaires, Timothy Zúñiga-Brown, announced that the consulate would soon begin processing some immigrant visas for which documentation already is complete, though

he did not give a date.

Most visas will continue to be processed in Guyana on the South American mainland a costly and difficult journey away for most Cubans.

Zúñiga-Brown said the U.S. is interested in "safe and legal" immigration, particularly for family reunification cases which had been complicated by the withdrawal of diplomats.

Cuba last year saw a surge in unauthorized migration attempts fueled in part by an economic crisis that was exacerbated by the pandemic, increased U.S. sanctions and cutbacks in

aid from Venezuela.

Most U.S. diplomats were withdrawn from Cuba in 2017 after the administration of then-President Donald Trump accused Cuba of targeting some at the post with weapons that caused lingering and sometimes serious brain injuries — allegations Cuba has always denied. Canadian diplomats also reported such incidents.

While the maladies came to be called "Havana Syndrome," they were also reported by hundreds of American officials at missions around the world and even in Washington.

CIA findings released in January determined it was unlikely that Russia or another foreign adversary

had used microwaves or other forms of directed energy to attack the Americans. □



A classic American car drives past the United States Embassy, in Havana, Cuba, Thursday, March 3, 2022.

Associated Press

Suicide bombing kills 56 at Shiite mosque in Pakistan

Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP) —

A suicide bomber struck inside a Shiite Muslim mosque in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar during Friday prayers, killing at least 56 worshippers and wounding 194 people, hospital officials said.

No militant group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Both the Islamic State group and the Pakistani Taliban — a militant group separate from the Taliban in Afghanistan — have carried out similar attacks in the past in the area, located near the border with Afghanistan.

According to the spokesman at Peshawar's Lady Reading Hospital, Asim Khan, many of the wounded were in critical condition. Scores of victims were peppered with shrapnel, several had limbs amputated and others were injured by flying debris.

Peshawar Police Chief Muhammed Ejaz Khan said the violence started when an armed attacker opened fire on police outside the mosque in Peshawar's old city. One policeman was killed in the gunfight, and another police officer was wounded. The attacker then ran inside the mosque and detonated his suicide vest.

The suicide bomber had strapped a powerful ex-



Rescue workers and volunteers gather at the site of bomb explosion in Peshawar, Pakistan, Friday, March 4, 2022.

plosive device to his body, packed with 5 kilograms (12 pounds) of explosives, said Moazzam Jah Ansari, the top police official for Khyber Pukhtunkhwa province where Peshawar is the capital.

The device was hidden beneath a large black shawl that covered much of the attacker's body, according to CCTV footage seen by The Associated Press. The footage showed the bomber moving quickly up a narrow street toward the mosque entrance. He fired at the police protecting the mosque before entering inside.

Within seconds, a powerful explosion occurred and the

camera lens was obscured with dust and debris. Ansari said the crudely made device was packed with ball bearings, a deadly method of constructing a bomb to inflict the most carnage spraying a larger area with deadly projectiles. The ball bearings caused the high death toll, Ansari said.

Local police official Waheed Khan said the explosion occurred as worshippers had gathered in the Kucha Risaldar Mosque for Friday prayers. There are fears the death toll could still rise further, he added. Ambulances rushed through congested narrow streets carrying the wounded to Lady Reading Hospi-

tal, where doctors worked feverishly.

Shayan Haider, a witness, had been preparing to enter the mosque when a powerful explosion threw him to the ground. "I opened my eyes and there was dust and bodies everywhere," he said.

At the Lady Reading Hospital Emergency department, there was chaos as doctors struggled to move the many wounded into operating theaters. Hundreds of relatives gathered outside the emergency department, many of them wailing and beating their chests, pleading for information about their loved ones.

Outside the mosque, Shiites pressed through the cordoned-off streets. Kucha Risaldar Mosque is one of the oldest in the area, predating the creation of Pakistan in 1947 as a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. The prayer leader, Allama Irshad Hussein Khalil, a prominent up and coming young Shiite leader, was among the dead. Throughout the city, ambulance sirens could be heard.

Prime Minister Imran Khan condemned the bombing. His national security adviser, Moeed Yusuf, said the bombing was a "heinous terrorist attack" and promised that those behind the carnage would "be brought to justice."

"We will not allow our gains against terrorism & our internal security to be compromised at any cost," Yusuf tweeted.

Retired army officer Sher Ali who had been inside the mosque at the time of the explosion was injured by flying shrapnel. He made a impassioned plea to the Pakistani government for better protection of the country's minority Shiites.

"What is our sin? What have we done? Aren't we citizens of this country?" he said from inside the emergency department, his white clothes splattered with blood. □

In unofficial capacity, Pompeo urges U.S. to recognize Taiwan



In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, left, poses for a photo with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen during a meeting at the Presidential Office in Taipei, Taiwan, Thursday, March 3, 2022.

Associated Press

By HUIZHONG WU

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — For-

mer U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a speech Friday on a non-official visit to Taiwan called for the U.S. to give diplomatic recognition to the self-ruled island China claims as its own territory.

During Pompeo's tenure in the Trump administration, the U.S. stepped up official exchanges with Taiwan in moves that were strongly opposed by China, but he did not publicly advocate for formal diplomatic recognition of Taiwan while in office.

The U.S. is Taiwan's largest unofficial ally but ended formal recognition when it established diplomatic

relations with mainland China's Communist government in 1979.

"It's my view the U.S. government should immediately and take necessary and long overdue steps to do the right and obvious thing, that is to offer the Republic of China Taiwan America' diplomatic recognition as a free and sovereign country," Pompeo said while speaking at the invitation of the Prospect Foundation in Taipei, a private think tank based in Taiwan.

"It's the reality. It's the fact... there's no need for Taiwan to declare independence because it's already an

independent nation," he added.

Pompeo also framed the Russian war in Ukraine as a battle of democracies and autocracies, praising Taiwan for being on the front lines of this fight between "freedom and tyranny."

Pompeo is speculated to be among several Republicans who may seek the party's presidential nomination in 2024.

Taiwan, formally known as the Republic of China (Taiwan), is where the former ruling government of mainland China, led by the Nationalist Party, fled to after losing a civil war with the Communist Party in 1949. □

Argentine bishop defended by pope sentenced in abuse case

By ALMUDENA CALATRAVA
BUENOS AIRES, Argentina
(AP) —

An Argentine court on Friday sentenced a Roman Catholic bishop to 4 1/2 years in prison for sexual abuse of two former seminarians in a major blow to Pope Francis, who had defended Gustavo Zanchetta following initial allegations. The prosecutors' office in the northern province of Salta reported the conviction and sentence on its Twitter account and said he had been ordered arrested.

The conviction in the pope's homeland hits at Francis' personal credibility since he had initially rejected accusations against Zanchetta, the former bishop of Oran, and created a job for him at the Vatican that got him out of Argentina.

Francis has defended his handling of the case, insisting that Zanchetta "defended himself well" when confronted with the first allegations that he had pornographic images of the victims on his cellphone. Francis also defended the decision to give him a job in one of the most sensitive Vatican offices, the treasury that manages the Holy See's investments and



Argentine Bishop Gustavo Zanchetta, left, stands with his lawyer Enzo Gianotti after he was convicted and sentenced to 4 1/2 years in prison for continued sexual abuse of two former seminarians in Oran, Argentina, Friday, March 4, 2022.

Associated Press

assets, saying Zanchetta had been prescribed psychological retreats each month in Spain and it didn't make sense for him to return to Argentina between each session.

Following the verdict, the bishop, wearing a pandemic facemask, was removed from the court in a car, though it was not clear where he was taken.

Local authorities began to investigate after the allegations emerged publicly in early 2019, when the newspaper El Tribuno de Salta reported complaints about Zanchetta's conduct as bishop in Oran, about 1,600 kilometers (900 miles) northwest of Buenos Aires.

Five priests made a formal accusation before church authorities against the bishop

in 2016, accusing him of authoritarianism, financial mismanagement and sexual abuse at the Saint John XXIII Seminary.

Prosecutor María Soledad Filtrín Cuezco told the court on Thursday that investigators had established the truthfulness of witnesses against the bishop, citing their internal logic, context and precise details.

Zanchetta had flown back to his home country from Rome to face the charges. He has denied the charges and said he is victim of revenge by priests in Oran with whom he had differences.

The pope had ordered a church trial into the case, though the results of that are not known.

Anne Barrett Doyle, co-director of BishopAccountability.org, which tracks clerical abuse cases, issued a statement saying the ruling is "a sign that even where the Catholic Church wields power, civil societies increasingly will not tolerate sexual abuse of young adults by powerful figures -- even if the accused is a Catholic bishop, and even if that bishop is supported by Pope Francis himself."

While allegations against Zanchetta emerged "in or around 2015, Pope Francis has signaled continued support for the bishop and an unwillingness to believe the victims," she said. "Most troubling, the pope refused to cooperate with prosecutors' request for information. This is old-school clericalism, not the accountability we were promised." □

Nicaragua tries, sentences more opposition leaders

MEXICO CITY (AP) — One-time Nicaragua presidential aspirant Cristiana Chamorro and one of her brothers were among five people formally placed on trial Thursday.

Chamorro, 68, has been under house arrest since June 2. She was taken under heavy guard to the notorious El Chipote prison in the capital, according to the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights.

Chamorro, her brother Pedro Joaquín Chamorro and three former employees of the Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation will be tried for money laundering and other alleged crimes. The foundation provided money for training journalists and defending freedom of expression.

She was one of the first

in a wave of detentions against opposition leaders, including seven potential presidential candidates, to clear the way from President Daniel Ortega's reelection to a fourth consecutive term in office Nov. 7.

Chamorro has maintained her innocence. She is the daughter of former President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who governed from 1990 to 1997.

Ortega's government has moved against a number of nongovernmental organizations it views as opposition. The president has claimed that organizations receiving funding from abroad were part of a broader conspiracy to remove him from office in 2018.

Nicaraguan judges also

sentenced several opposition leaders, including former high-level Sandinistas and former presidential contenders, to prison terms for "conspiracy to undermine national integrity."

Former presidential contender Félix Maradiaga and Juan Sebastián Chamorro both were sentenced to 13 years in prison. The Central American country's former ambassador to the United States, Arturo Cruz Sequeira, was sentenced to 9 years.

Former Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister José Pallais, 68, was also sentenced to 13 years, as was business leader José Adán Aguerri. Opposition activists Violeta Granera and opposition leader Tamara Dávila got sentences of 8 years.

Given the notoriously bad



Cristiana Chamorro, former director of the Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation for Reconciliation and Democracy, and daughter of a former president, arrives at the public Ministry where she was called for a meeting to explain alleged "inconsistencies" in financial reports filed with the government between 2015 and 2019 in Managua, Nicaragua, May 21, 2021.

Associated Press

conditions at El Chipote prison and the age of some of the opposition leaders, relatives fear the terms may effectively be death sentences.

Hugo Torres, a former Sandinista guerilla leader who once led a raid that helped free then rebel Ortega from prison, died while awaiting trial. He was 73. □

WIN \$10 UP TO \$1,000 IN FREE SLOT PLAY THE DAY YOU JOIN THE CLUB!

Free Shirt Sunday!

Get a **FREE** Alhambra T-Shirt when you earn **250 Slot Points** on Sunday with your **Players' Club card!**

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO

Offering a wide variety of Retail & Dining Outlets, Salon & Spa Services, Souvenirs and more.

Dunkin Donuts | Baskin Robbins | Fusion Piano & Wine Bar
Hungry Piranha | Twist of Flavors | Juan Valdez Café
The Brownstone Ribs & Seafood
Coming Soon: Auntie Anne's Pretzels



Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 583.5000 | casinoalhambra.com

Play Responsibly. Visit www.gamblersanonymous.org if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



Covid Test Center at Paseo has the best experience!

PALM BEACH - Don't spend a single moment of your long awaited holiday in Aruba thinking about your return testing. The Covid Test Center Aruba located at the Paseo Herencia Mall is your travel ally. Just sit back and relax knowing that, when the time comes, their professional staff will make this process a breeze for you. No need to make an appointment or dread the nasal swab; you'll be done with it in a matter of minutes and back to fun stuff.

Some regions require proof or certification of negative COVID-19 status before allowing people into or out of the country. With rules and guidelines varying greatly from country to country, the safest approach is to have recent proof you are COVID-19 negative before you get to the airport. Covid Test Center @ Paseo provides both PCR and Antigen type testing with results within hours; and both are accepted by the CDC.

Covid Test Center @ Paseo is conveniently lo-

cated at the Paseo Herencia Mall in the heart of the Palm Beach Strip and right across from the Playa Linda and Holiday Inn hotels; only two doors from T.G.I. Friday's. We are open seven days a week, between 9 am and 9 pm. This gives you the choice to walk in when it better suits you. It can be at the start or at the end of your day. No appointment needed here. The friendly technicians at Covid Test Center @ Paseo will take your information as we are aware it is imperative that this shows accurately on the results. For a seamless process, please verify that you have provided the correct email to deliver the certificate. Said certificate can be printed at our offices should you wish to do so.

We understand that nobody enjoys doing a nasal swab. That is why we take pride in our reputation of being the gentlest swabbers on the island. First, we will not rush you just to go to the next in line. Through clear given instructions

we want you to feel comfortable. When you are ready, we will promptly but tenderly take a proper sample. Many elsewhere traumatized people praise the difference it makes to test with us.

Forget about counting hours before your flight, our turnaround is fast! For travel to the US, for example, a day before will suffice. A great game plan is to test first, then head out for an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment at the Paseo Herencia Mall, home of the water and lights show in the evenings. By the time you are back at the hotel, your results will be ready in your inbox.

A PCR test costs \$75 and results are ready the next day, while Antigen test costs \$35 with same day results. If you are staying at an off-high-rise area property, you can benefit from the free parking our customers receive at the mall lot.). For more information follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. □



The first phase of the construction for the Palm Beach roundabout will begin

Oranjestad - Starting Monday 7th of March 2022 the construction of the roundabout at Palm Beach will begin.

At the same time, the Department of Public Works will begin with the repair and renovation of various roads in the area, as well as some work related to utilities. This project will be executed in two phases which will have duration of 130 business days and a cost of 1.8 million Aruban florins. The first phase will begin on the 7th of March and culminate half of July, moment in which the second phase will begin to then culminate in the month of September.

For reasons related to the first phase of this project, the road on the west of the cross-section at Palm Beach Plaza will be closed and will be so for approximately 20 weeks. Changes in the route will be indicated with signs and traffic barricades.

Traffic coming from Noord can make a right turn at the Palm Beach Plaza cross-section in the direction of High Rise Hotels and exit at ex-House of Cheng, and to go in the direction of Palm Beach, you can make a left turn at the Palm Beach cross-section. Traffic from Noord on Ave-

nida Nelson O. can make a turn 200 meters after the cross-section at Palm Beach Plaza on the right and onto the sand road. You will have traffic arrows and signs to guide you to the exit behind Wendy's

Noord in the direction to the principal road of Palm Beach to continue down to Oranjestad.

Palm Beach traffic can make a right turn in the direction of Noord, Oran-

jestad traffic can make a right turn in the direction of Palm Beach and traffic from Oranjestad on Avenida Nelson O. Oduber can continue straight in the direction of Noord.

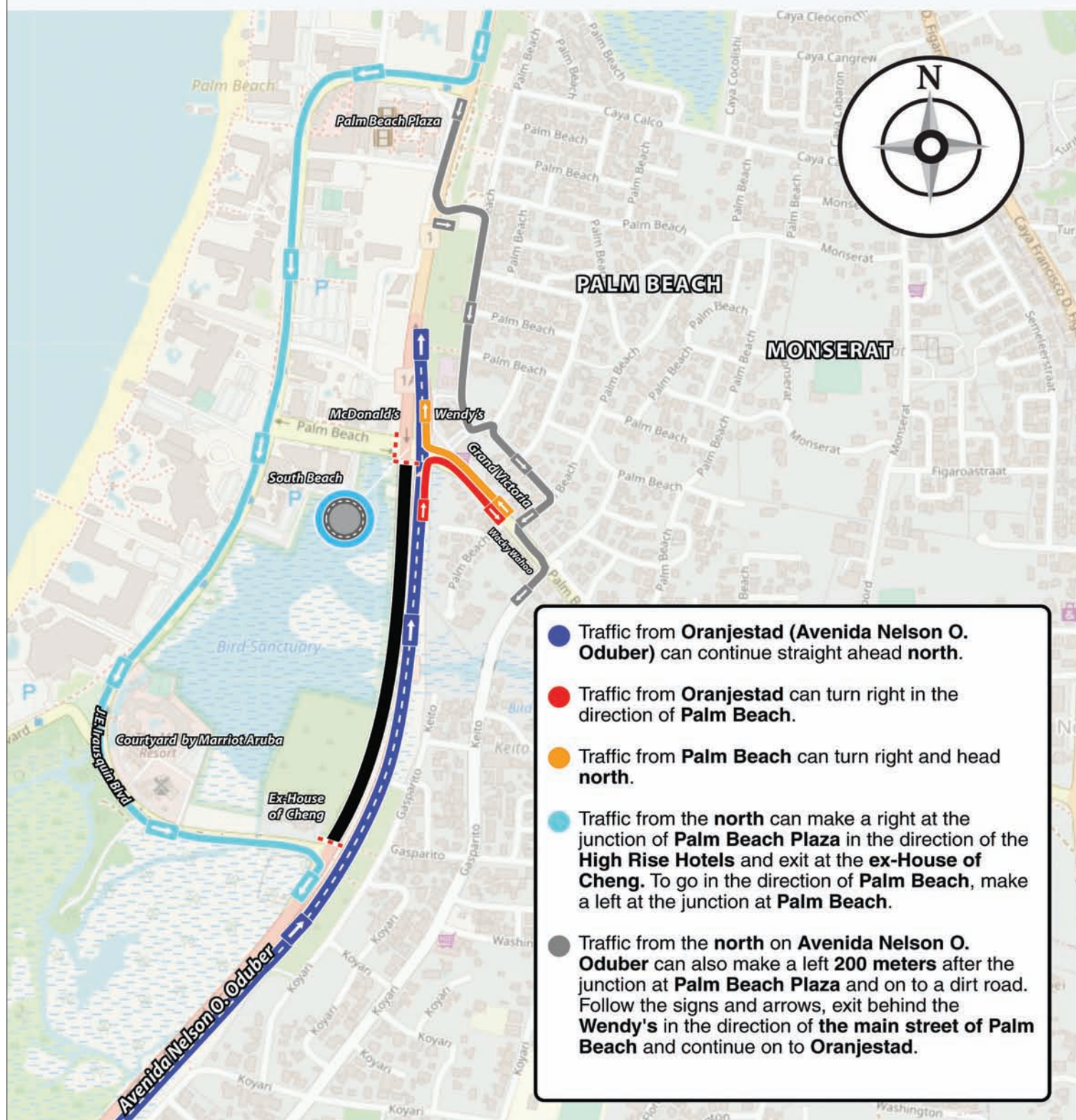
DOW and KPA ask all drivers and people on our island to keep these changes in mind and the inconveniences they may cause, as well as extend their gratitude for the understanding and co-operation. □



CONSTRUCTION OF A ROUNDABOUT AT PALM BEACH

On this coming **Monday, March, 7th 2022**, will commence the construction of **Roundabout Palm Beach at the intersection of Palm Beach**. This project will be executed in two phases. **In the first phase, we will be closing the west side of the intersection for construction, and this will have a duration of approximately 20 weeks.** Signs and barricades will aid in indicating the detours illustrated below.

DOW and KPA urge the general public of Aruba, and all motorists and inhabitants of the area to please be aware of these upcoming detours. We would like to offer our apologies for any inconveniences caused as a result of these detours, and we're thankful for your cooperation and understanding.



**ARUBA
CLEAN**



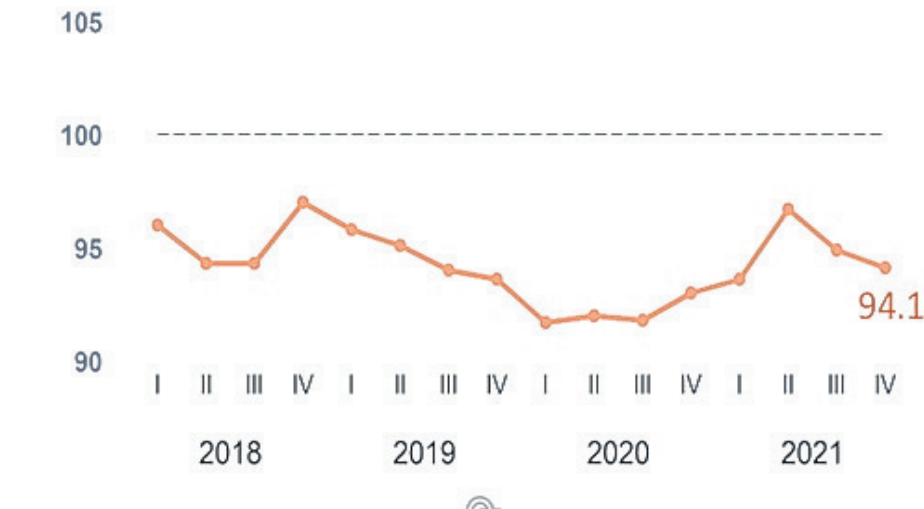
**IS MORE
DUSHI**

Consumer confidence more pessimistic in the fourth quarter of 2021

Results for the fourth quarter of 2021

As the new COVID-19 variant, Omicron, was causing a new wave of infections, consumers became more pessimistic, as consumer confidence index fell by 0.8 index point to 94.1 in the fourth quarter of 2021 (Chart 1).

By the end of the fourth quarter, top of mind consumer concerns were: (i) worsening of the government financial position (7 percentage points more compared to the previous quarter (Q3-2021: 54 percent)), while (ii) 32 percent expected worse economic conditions, i.e., 7 percentage points more compared to previous quarter (Q3-2021: 25 percent). Noteworthy is that 51 percent of respondents still thought that finding a new job would be difficult, i.e., 4 percentage points more compared to previous quarter (Q3-2021: 47 per-



cent). However, only 56 percent of respondents indicated that they were concerned about their personal health, which is 10 percentage points less compared to previous quarter (Q3-2021: 66 percent).

Both the present situation and the future expectation index fell, i.e., by, respectively, 1.6 index points to 93.4 and 1.0 index point to 96.1 in the fourth quarter of 2021. More respondents reported (60 percent) that they expected the Aruban

economy to take an additional 2 years to fully recover from the COVID-19 crisis (Q3-2021: 56 percent).

The number of respondents (66 percent) reporting that buying a car was not suitable remained practically the same (Q3-2021: 67 percent), while a slightly higher number (67 percent) indicated that taking out a loan was not appropriate (Q3-2021: 65 percent). A marginally smaller number of respondents (60 percent) reported that taking out a mortgage was unsuitable (Q3-2021: 61 percent). About 51 percent stated that going on vacation was not appropriate (Q3-2021: 56 percent). Consequently, the consumer purchasing habit index stood at 93.9 in the fourth quarter of 2021, down from 94.1 in the previous quarter. □

Attractions and Sightseeing locations in Aruba



ORANJESTAD — There are enough sightseeing locations on the island to fill up a month-long vacation. Aruba's beaches are a big attraction, and although it's great to spend long days just relaxing on the beach and listening to the ocean, there are also plenty of opportunities to get to know Aruba's most attractive sights, historical and natural attractions, and museums. Check out these attractions you don't want to miss!

Blue Horses in Downtown, Oranjestad

This series of 8 sculptures were created by native Aruban artist Osaira Muyale. She named the project Paarden Baai, which translates to "Horse Bay". The statues were installed in 2015 and pay homage to the rich history of Aruba's horse trading industry. In the 17th Century Aruba was used by many countries (Europe, South America, Caribbean islands, and the Mediterranean) as a trading post. The most popular being cattle and horse trading. Horses were once the most important sources of livelihood for Aruba.

For 4 centuries the horse and cattle trade ran strong. At any given time Aruba was home to herds of thousands of horses that roamed the island. Aruba being the perfect trading post en-



couraged an extremely diverse culture and is the reason almost all Arubans speak more than 1 or 2 languages. Each of the 8 bright royal blue horses is unique and carries its own name and personality. Pictured above is the mare Sinfiorosa, but you can also find Saturnina, Escapia, Rosalina, Eufrosina, Ambrosio, Bonifacia, and Celestina. The sculptures embody strength, nobility, grace, beauty and freedom. They represent the historical moment where the horses jumped from the ship decks into the Caribbean and swam to the Aruban Bay.

When you visit Aruba be sure to explore downtown Oranjestad and try to find all 8!

The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas.

A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos, was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession leaves from the St. Theresita church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed. The grotto is located road-side and



can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location.

Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Watch more than 80 species of migratory birds from the Bubali watch tower, overlooking their resting and breeding area. The observation tower allows birdwatchers to get a true birds' eye view. Migratory birds, looking for lush vegetation in which to nest, find an oasis within the Bubali Bird Sanctuary. The nearby water treatment facility empties into two inter-connected man-made bird ponds. Birds that inhabit the sanctuary include herons, egrets, gulls, skimmers, coots, ducks and more. Located within walking distance of the Palm Beach resorts, the Bubali Bird Sanctuary offers some unique bird watching opportunities. You can't miss it as it is located just in front of the historical Old Dutch Windmill. Make sure to bring your camera as many of these birds will randomly fly by the observation tower giving a little show. This is a great place to bring kids for a unique and possibly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be so close to the untamed.

The happiest island in the Caribbean is so much more than just sun, sand and sea. □

Japan's Honda, Sony joining forces on new electric vehicle

By YURI KAGEYAMA

AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Two big names in Japanese electronics and autos are joining forces to produce an electric vehicle together. Sony Group Corp. and Honda Motor Co. agreed to set up a joint venture this year to start selling an electric vehicle by 2025, both sides said Friday.

The plan is to bring together Honda's expertise in mobility development, technology and sales with Sony's imaging, telecommunication, network and entertainment expertise.

A union of traditionally different manufacturing businesses is uncommon for Japan. But it makes sense in the age of electric vehicles, which lack gasoline-powered engines and have complicated electronics.

All the world's automakers have been developing zero-emissions electric vehicles, as concerns grow about pollution and climate change. But they face tough competition from relative newcomers like Tesla.

The joint venture will develop and design the product, but will use Honda's plant for manufacturing. Sony,



Sony Group Corp.'s Chief Executive Kenichiro Yoshida, left, and Honda Motor Co.'s Chief Executive Toshihiro Mibe, right, shake hands at a press conference in Tokyo Friday, March 4, 2022.

Associated Press

which makes the PlayStation video-game console and owns movie and music businesses, will develop the mobility services platform. Honda makes the CR-V sport utility vehicle and Clarity plug-in hybrid and already has its own electric vehicle program, teaming up with General Motors to share platforms for EVs in North America.

The joint venture with Sony will be separate, meant to produce unexpected value "in a chemical reaction," said Honda Chief Executive Toshihiro Mibe.

"We're so used to thinking

within the category of autos, it's hard to think outside that box," Mibe told reporters, while stressing that Honda will continue with its own EV program.

Sony showed an electric car concept at the CES gadget show in Las Vegas two years ago. It has been eager to find an auto partner, said Sony Group Chief Executive Kenichiro Yoshida.

The two executives, appearing together at a hastily called news conference in Tokyo, did not rule out a future stock listing of the joint venture.

Shares in both companies fell Friday, with Honda down 4.5% and Sony losing 3.2%.

Both Sony and Honda have humble beginnings in the 1940s when Japan was rebuilding from the ashes of World War II. Both had charismatic founders.

Honda was founded by Soichiro Honda, an engineer, industrialist and reputed nonconformist. He started out helping at his father's bicycle repair shop and eventually built Honda into a global powerhouse. He is often quoted as saying things like: A diploma

is worthless, learn to work with your hands, or work for yourself and not a company.

Sony was founded by Akio Morita, who co-wrote "The Japan That Can Say No," which advocated for a more assertive and prouder Japan, and Masaru Ibuka. Morita had market savvy while Ibuka was known for product development. In the 1970s when Sony was developing the Walkman portable audio player, some engineers were skeptical.

But Morita insisted people would want to listen to music on-the-go.

"Although Sony and Honda are companies that share many historical and cultural similarities, our areas of technological expertise are very different," Mibe said.

"I believe this alliance which brings together the strengths of our two companies offers great possibilities for the future of mobility."

Sony Group Chief Executive Kenichiro Yoshida said Ibuka respected and had learned a lot from Honda.

"Commitment at the top is important," said Yoshida. "We are committed to taking up this challenge together." □

Report: American whiskey exports starting to rebound

By BRUCE SCHREINER

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — American whiskey exports, battered by tariffs and the COVID-19 pandemic, started rebounding in 2021, but distillers have more ground to make up to fully recover, an industry group said.

Exports of bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye whiskey reached \$975 million in 2021, up 15% from the prior year, according to a report issued by the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States. Last year's total was still down 18% from the record high exports — about \$1.2 billion in 2018.

American whiskey distillers got caught up in a trans-Atlantic trade fight, causing deep drops in exports to the European Union —

the industry's biggest overseas market. The EU imposed a retaliatory tariff on those spirits in mid-2018 in response to then-President Donald Trump's decision to slap tariffs on European steel and aluminum. A deal was reached in late 2021 to suspend those tariffs on American spirits.

"U.S. spirits exports are beginning to bounce back and that's definitely a positive sign, but the value of 2021 exports remains far below levels achieved before the 2018 retaliatory tariffs kicked in," Rob Maron, the council's vice president of international trade, said Thursday.

But as American whiskey producers work to regrow EU market share, the sector still faces a retaliatory

tariff in another key market — the United Kingdom — which continues to curtail growth, Maron said.

Several factors led to last year's rebound, including the reopening of the hospitality sector as COVID-19 restrictions eased, consumers choosing more premium and super-premium American spirits and the lifting of tariffs by key trading partners, the report said.

But distillers face headwinds in redeveloping European sales, including supply-chain problems, said Amir Peay, owner of the Lexington, Kentucky-based James E. Pepper Distillery. For an industry that requires patience in crafting its products, it will take time to build back market share.

"The wind is in a much bet-



Shelves display bottles of bourbons for sale at a Pennsylvania fine wine and spirits store, Saturday, Jan. 22, 2022, in Harmony, Pa.

Associated Press

ter direction," Peay said in a phone interview Friday. "But it's just unrealistic to think that we can flick a light switch and just immediately go back to a realistic pace

of rebuilding what we lost. It's just impossible from the situation we're in right now." His distillery's signature bourbon and rye brand is James E. Pepper 1776. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 38 Hunting

1 Heartless goddess

6 Crack up 39 Low

11 Singer cards in

Ronstadt pinochle

12 Biscotti 40 Door

flavor sign

13 Useful 41 Grove

skill makeup

14 Light 42 Run-down

wood

15 Hot dog

17 Physics

particle

18 Seine

summer

19 Wall

Street

workers

22 Mafia

head

23 German

vowel

topper

24 Does

paper

work

25 Aden

native

27 Brief

time

30 Prepares

31 Mendes of

movies

32 Tough

wood

33 Abrupt

35 Grammar

topic

L	U	C	A	S		L	I	F	T	S
I	N	E	R	T		O	L	L	I	E
D	O	D	G	E		G	L	E	N	N
		R	O	W	S		B	U	S	T
C	O	I	N		P	A	I	R		
A	R	C		P	A	S	T	D	U	E
N	A	D	A	L		K	E	E	N	S
S	L	I	C	E	R	S		L	I	P
		G	R	A	Y		K	A	T	Y
L	U	G	E		E	P	I	C		
A	R	O	A	R		I	N	O	I	L
V	I	R	G	O		E	D	U	C	E
A	S	Y	E	T		D	A	R	E	D

Yesterday's answer

7 "Not — 26 Flam-

dare!" mable gas

8 Setting 27 Peaceful

9 Classify 28 Made flat

10 College 29 Caged

heads bird

16 Royal furs 30 Lean

20 Heights 34 Eat in

21 German style

24 Print units 36 "My

25 Polite 37 Twisty

answer turn

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10
11						12				
13						14				
15						16			17	
18				19		20	21			
22				23						
			24							
	25	26						27	28	29
30								31		
32					33	34				
35			36	37		38				
39						40				
41						42				

3-5

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-5 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

R S P T Y T J X Q P E X B E S G X T L J

L Q Q S T U J O P D Q S T E P P J

X S L K K U J O S G F X T K D L I W I P Q

V T S T L J W . — S T V J T R E J P Y T J V

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IF HELP AND SALVATION ARE TO COME, THEY CAN ONLY COME FROM THE CHILDREN, FOR THE CHILDREN ARE THE MAKERS OF MEN. — MARIA MONTESSORI

Fox News defense reporter challenges war comments on air



This image from video released by Fox News shows correspondent Jennifer Griffin reporting on crisis in Ukraine.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Fox News national security correspondent Jennifer Griffin couldn't hold back when following a retired U.S. Army colonel on the air recently, saying she barely had time to correct all of his "distortions."

She tried, though. And it wasn't for the first time or the last time.

Griffin, who has reported for Fox News Channel since 1996, has attracted attention over the past two weeks as she has publicly corrected or contradicted several Fox analysts and hosts on the air about the crisis in Ukraine. When Tucker Carlson suggested this week that some reporters are acting as flacks for the Pentagon, some interpreted that as a criticism of his colleague.

Meanwhile, former Fox host Bill O'Reilly singled Griffin out as a gutsy reporter unafraid to challenge others. Griffin says her efforts are consistent with what she's always tried to do for 25 years, both on the air and behind the scenes at Fox News.

"I think you want your experts, in today's media environment, to be passionate about what they know and what they feel about the facts," said Steve

Krakauer, author of *The Fourth Watch*, a media newsletter with a conservative viewpoint. "I want them to be in the story."

Griffin knows her beat as much as anyone in journalism and her real-time fact-checks are a valuable public service, as long as she doesn't get caught in the muck of partisan debating, he said on Thursday.

Griffin has pushed back on comments made by Sean Hannity, Steve Doocy, Harris Faulkner and Greg Gutfeld during appearances on their own shows. After Hannity criticized President Joe Biden on Ukraine policy, Griffin noted that every president since the fall of the Soviet Union has made mistakes there. Doocy argued on "Fox & Friends" that sanctions haven't worked against Russia; Griffin said it was too soon to say that. When Faulkner similarly questioned whether sanctions were a sufficient step, Griffin said that sending troops to the area would have given Putin an excuse to invade. She said it was "not some wag-the-dog situation" when Gutfeld suggested on "The Five" that the Ukraine crisis had been manufactured.

This past Sunday, she took on a retired U.S. Army brig-

adier general, Don Bolduc, after he said that it "boggles my mind" that the United States hadn't already gone "all in" on Ukraine. Griffin said Bolduc was a politician, not a student of history.

"To suggest that the U.S. would put indirect fire or special operations or CIA on the ground to give Putin any sort of excuse to broaden this conflict is extremely dangerous talk at a time like this," Griffin said. Earlier that day, she was interviewed by Trey Gowdy after an appearance by retired U.S. Army Col. Doug Macgregor, who urged the United States to stay out of Ukraine and not ship it any weapons. He said the Russians should be allowed to annex the portion of Ukraine they are most interested in.

When Griffin followed him, she said she needed to correct some of what Macgregor had said, "and I'm not sure 10 minutes is enough time because there are so many distortions." She said that Macgregor sounded like an apologist for Putin. "That kind of projection of withdrawal and weakness is what made Putin think he could move into a sovereign country," she said.

Macgregor, in a subsequent radio appearance, criticized Griffin for offering a "standard neo-con narrative" of drawing comparison to 1930s appeasement of Adolf Hitler. He called it a "tired trope" that had nothing to do with the people and events of today.

Two days after his appearance on Gowdy's show, Macgregor was brought on as lead guest by Tucker Carlson in prime time. Carlson's show is usually the most-watched program on Fox.

"Unlike so many of the so-called reporters you see on television, he is not acting secretly as a flack for (Defense Secretary) Lloyd Austin at the Pentagon," Carlson said in his introduction. "No, Doug Macgregor is an honest man." □

Honey Dolls
MASSAGE AND ESCORT SERVICE

Beautiful Latin Girls
Pick-up & Delivery

Serving Men - Couple - Women - All Genders

+297 565-9535

WWW.PLEASUREINARUBA.COM

24/7

Bitcoin again viewed as safe haven amid geopolitical tension

SILVER SPRING, Md. (AP) — Bitcoin prices have surged as investors again appear to view the volatile cryptocurrency as a safe haven for their money and Russians and Ukrainians seek alternatives to their country's financial institutions. After initially falling to around \$34,000 following Russia's advance into Ukraine last week, bitcoin pushed about 10% higher on Monday and is now up more than 25% in the past week, to \$43,900 Wednesday afternoon. Other cryptocurrencies have also soared. Russians are exchanging their rapidly devalued rubles for bitcoin to try and mitigate the impact of the economic sanctions imposed by the international communities for their country's attack on Ukraine. The Ukrainian government has limited its citizens' ability to conduct electronic fund transactions, so Ukrainians are also turning to bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. They're also buying stablecoins whose values are pegged to the U.S. dollar.

Prior to the Russian invasion, bitcoin had been trading in a way similar to other riskier assets such as technology stocks. Investors have been expecting the Federal Reserve to soon begin raising interest rates in response to high inflation. They moved money out of more speculative investments such as bitcoin and bought stocks of banks other industries that tend to perform well when rates are rising. That changed after the invasion when Western countries responded with a series of steps that limit the ability of Russia's government and the country's oligarchs to access the financial systems. Those moves have spillover effects for Russia's citizens, who have been lining up at banks and ATMs to withdraw money. Blockchain data and analytics firm Coin Metrics says trading volume in bitcoin in exchange for both rubles and Ukrainian hryvnia has spiked in recent days, but

such trading still only represents a small fraction of the overall volume. Translation: investors at large are viewing bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies as a good place to store assets again. Kyle Waters, a research analyst at Coin Metrics, said crypto trading data confirms that recent geopolitical events have "more generally" increased demand for cryptocurrency, which can be transferred anywhere and without the need for a third party. "This could go for anyone, and certainly could include everyday Russian and Ukrainian citizens trying to escape a devaluing local currency," Waters said. Some analysts and media reports have speculated that Russian oligarchs could use cryptocurrencies to avoid sanctions. On Wednesday, the Justice Department said it is creating a task force that would, among other things, try to thwart any efforts to use cryptocurrency to get around sanctions. Some analysts suggest this bitcoin surge may already be nearing its ceiling as prices for energy jump as the Russia-Ukraine conflict rages. Oil soared to \$111 per barrel Wednesday, its highest level in more than a decade. Bitcoin mining, where computers are used to verify bitcoin transactions, consumes an enor-



An advertisement for Bitcoin cryptocurrency is displayed on a street in Hong Kong, Thursday, Feb. 17, 2022.

Associated Press

mous amount of energy. "Bitcoin has had a nice run but exhaustion in this rally will likely settle in as surging energy costs will likely impact some mining abroad," said Edward Moya of Oan-

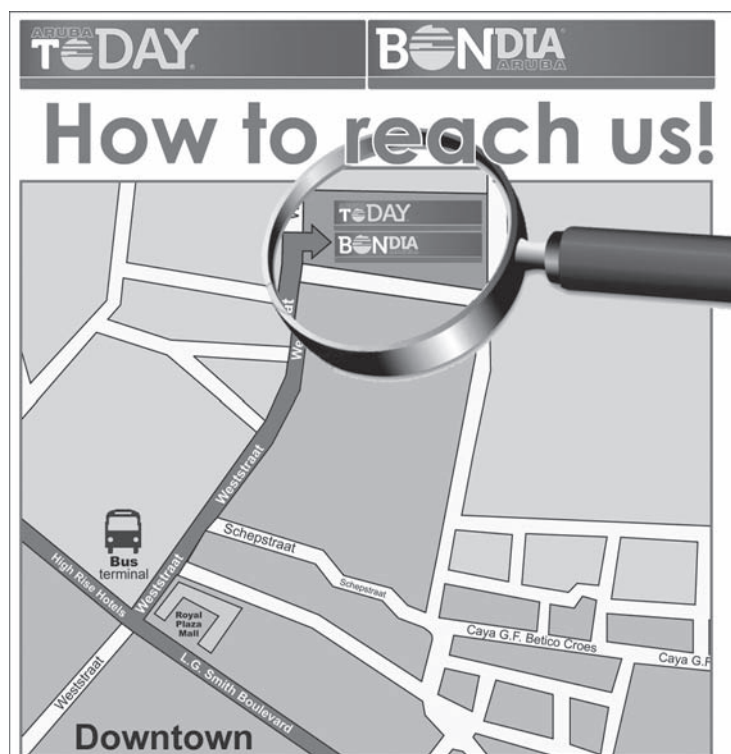
da in a markets summary report. □

For Sale by Owner
Eagle Aruba Resort & Casino
Weeks 2,3,4
Three Bedroom Suite
Unit #3508
\$14,950.00 per wk
Contact
sales.aruba@hotmail.com

215098

For Sale by Owner
Caribbean Palm Village Resort
Wk 50-2BR/28th, \$1,900
Wks 51&52-2BR/28th, \$2,900
Wks 51&52-1BR/2Bth, \$1,900
Wk 52-1BR/2Bth, \$2,500
Wk 11-2BR/2Bth, \$1,900
Wk 12-1 BR/2Bth, \$1,200
Wk 13-2 BR/2Bth, \$1,300
Contact:
sales.aruba@hotmail.com

215061



ROCO PLAZA
FLEAMARKET #ONE
Sunday 6 MARCH
Antiqueshop 10-1 pm
Discount on everything
Open Ma- Zat. 9.30-1
Charity fleamarket SALE
Every Saturday from 9-1
Vegetables fruits fish and
Plants .INFO 741-5640

ARUBA
TODAY

Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editors

Pilar Flores

Liza Koolman (Management assistant)

Richard Brooks

Sales

Liza Koolman

Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Columnists

Anthony Croes

Weststraat 22

T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

W: www.arubatoday.com

@arubatoday



HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Botica Eagle Tel. 587 9011

San Nicolas:

San Nicolas Tel. 584 5712

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

Like
us on
Facebook

facebook.com/arubatoday/

Judge approves fix to stem race bias in NFL concussion deal

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Black retired football players who were denied payments for dementia in the NFL's \$1 billion concussion settlement can seek to be retested or have their claims rescored to eliminate racial bias in the testing and payout formula, under a revised plan finalized Friday.

Outrage over the use of "race-norming" in the dementia testing — which assumed that Black people have a lower cognitive baseline score, making it harder for them to show mental declines linked to football — forced the NFL and players' lawyers back to the negotiating table last year.

The revisions could allow many retired players to resubmit their claims and add \$100 million or more to the NFL's legal tab. The NFL, through the fund, has paid out more than \$800 million to date, nearly half for dementia claims. The dementia awards average about \$600,000.

"Thousands of Black players stand to benefit from these changes to the settlement," said lawyer Cyril V. Smith, who represents former players Najeh Davenport and Kevin Henry, whose 2020 race discrimination lawsuit brought the issue to light.

Senior U.S. District Judge Anita B. Brody in Philadelphia, who has overseen the NFL concussion case for a decade, dismissed their lawsuit but ordered the parties to address the



Former NFL players Ken Jenkins, right, and Clarence Vaughn III, center right, along with their wives, Amy Lewis, center, and Brooke Vaughn, left, carry tens of thousands of petitions demanding equal treatment for everyone involved in the settlement of concussion claims against the NFL, to the federal courthouse in Philadelphia, Friday, May 14, 2021.

Associated Press

problem. She approved the negotiated changes in an order filed Friday.

More than 3,300 former players or their families have sought awards for brain injuries linked to their playing days, more than 2,000 of them for moderate to advanced dementia.

The dementia cases have proven the most contentious, and only 3 in 10 claims have been paid to date. Another one-third have been denied, and the rest remain in limbo, often as the claim goes through several layers of review by the claims administrator, medical and legal consultants, audit investigators and judges.

In one recent ruling that shows the difficulty families have faced navigating the claims process, the reviewer bemoaned the long delays experienced by the widow of a former player found after his 2019 death to have advanced CTE, or chronic traumatic encephalopathy.

His medical records show "progressive cognitive decline and un rebutted evidence that he suffered from CTE at the time of his death," reviewer David Hoffman wrote.

"But those diagnoses, and the supporting medical records, do not fit into the settlement's prescribed boxes for the claimed qualifying

diagnosis (of dementia)," said Hoffman, an expert in contract law at the University of Pennsylvania law school.

The player, a Black man who was 57 when he died, also had his scores normed to account for his race, age, education and other factors, in keeping with the protocols used at the time. According to Hoffman, his claim would not qualify for an award even if his tests were rescored under the new race-blind formula.

The vast majority of the league's players — 70% of active players and more than 60% of living retirees — are Black. So the changes are expected to be signifi-

cant, and potentially costly for the NFL.

The agreement to end race-norming follows months of closed-door negotiations between lawyers for the NFL, the class counsel for the nearly 20,000 retired players, and Smith and others representing Davenport and Henry.

Ken Jenkins and his wife, Amy Lewis, have also fought for the changes, gathering thousands of petitions and pressing the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department to investigate the alleged discrimination. The binary scoring system used in dementia testing — one for Black people, one for everyone else — was developed by neurologists in the 1990s as a crude way to factor in a patient's socioeconomic background. Experts say it was never meant to be used to determine payouts in a court settlement.

However, it was adopted by both sides in the 2015 settlement that resolved lawsuits accusing the NFL of hiding what it knew about the risk of repeated concussions.

The 65-year settlement also grants financial awards to ex-players with Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. It does not cover CTE — which some call the signature disease of football — except for men diagnosed with it posthumously before April 2015, a deadline set to avoid incentivizing suicides. □



Trainer Bob Baffert stands outside his barn at Churchill Downs Monday, May 2, 2016, in Louisville, Ky.

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky racing officials have denied trainer Bob

Baffert's request to stay his suspension for a failed post-race drug test by Medina

Kentucky racing board upholds Bob Baffert's suspension

Spirit that led to his disqualification as Kentucky Derby winner.

Kentucky Horse Racing Commission board members on Friday voted 10-0 with three abstentions against the stay in a specially called meeting. KHRC stewards last week suspended the Hall of Fame trainer for 90 days with a \$7,500 fine and disqualified the now-de-

ceased colt for having the corticosteroid betamethasone in his system last May. Betamethasone is allowed in Kentucky but prohibited on race day.

Director Marc A. Guilfoil denied an initial request to stay the suspension, which was scheduled to start on March 8 but is delayed pending a March 17 hearing before Franklin County Circuit Judge Thomas

Wingate.

Clark Brewster, an attorney for Baffert, argued that the steroid came from a topical ointment rather than an injection. KHRC general counsel Jennifer Wolsing countered that the source of the betamethasone was irrelevant and cited Baffert's failure to keep promises to improve his operation after a series of positives by his horses. □

Escaping salary cap trouble is a true trick of the NFL trade

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — New Minnesota Vikings general manager Kwesi Adofo-Mensah worked eight years on Wall Street, in between economics degrees from Princeton and Stanford.

Yet he still found himself chasing a challenge, into the controlled-market financial arena of pro football roster building.

The first offseason for Adofo-Mensah with the Vikings will be a tall task. They're facing a \$45 million salary cap charge on the final year of quarterback Kirk Cousins' existing contract, and their current commitments project to be more than \$15 million over the cap.

"There's a little bit of art, and there's a little bit of science. That's what makes the puzzle fun," Adofo-Mensah said. "Honestly, that's what drew me to this sport, and it's why I think all of us love competing at the highest level."

The salary cap for 2022 is projected at \$208.2 million per team, a \$25.7 million spike from last year. The pandemic-related revenue drop during the empty-stadium season of 2020 triggered an unprecedented \$15.7 million decrease for 2021. Contracts negotiated prior to COVID-19's descendance on the league were also calculated with the customary rise in mind.

While the overall landscape looks smoother this



Minnesota Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins (8) runs on the field before an NFL football game against the Chicago Bears, Sunday, Jan. 9, 2022, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

year than last year, success in the fall and winter will require creative and courageous decisions in the spring. Bigger cap increases are coming once the new media rights deals kick in for 2023, but that windfall won't help the Vikings now. The same goes for the New Orleans Saints, Green Bay Packers, Dallas Cowboys and Super Bowl champion Los Angeles Rams, the four other teams whose cap situations are the furthest in the red with less than two weeks before free agency begins.

According to figures compiled by Over the Cap, an

NFL salary tracking website, as of Thursday the Saints are approximately \$42 million over the threshold, followed by the Packers (\$31 million), Cowboys (\$22 million), Rams (\$21 million) and Vikings. Not only do teams need to get under the cap for compliance, they must save space for draft picks, and that's before signing any new players on the market.

Those five NFC teams went a combined 54-31 last season, and the Packers, Cowboys and Rams accounted for three of the NFL's six best records. There's usually a price for contending—and

in the case of the Rams, winning it all — that comes in subsequent years in the form of cap challenges.

"The pandemic certainly threw a wrench into everything as far as the salary cap numbers and they'd be so steady for so long," Packers general manager Brian Gutekunst said. "You kind of had that comforting feeling of where it's going to be. When that got changed, with where our team was at, it made it a little more difficult. We're very hopeful we're coming out of that."

The Packers are waiting for word from four-time MVP

Aaron Rodgers, whose cap hit of more than \$46 million for 2022 would almost certainly be lowered with a contract extension if he returns. All-Pro wide receiver Davante Adams can become a free agent, so they'd have to fit him in, too.

That means restructuring more veteran deals, as they've already done with defensive tackle Kenny Clark, or flat out releasing accomplished players. Outside linebacker Za'Darius Smith could well be one of those, with cap relief of more than \$15 million if released.

The Cowboys are now dealing with the welcomed-but-daunting ramifications of having a franchise quarterback, Dak Prescott, on his second contract. They could create \$16 million in cap space by cutting wide receiver Amari Cooper and another \$8 million by dumping defensive end DeMarcus Lawrence. The problem is those are two vital players.

"We can have another good roster again, but we're going to have to massage this and we're not going to be able to keep everybody, and we're going to have to be efficient in free agency and we're going to have to be efficient in the draft," Cowboys executive Stephen Jones said. □

MLB players start \$1M fund for workers impacted by lockout

NEW YORK (AP) — Locked-out Major League Baseball players are starting a \$1 million fund to support workers impacted by canceled games. The players' association said Friday the fund will be administered by the union and the AFL-CIO. It will be distributed to stadium workers and others caused financial hardship by baseball's ninth work stoppage, which was in its 93rd day. Spring training games failed to start as scheduled on Feb. 26. Commissioner Rob Man-

fred on Tuesday canceled the first two series for each team during the regular season, scheduled to start March 31. "Many aren't seen or heard, but they are vital to the entertainment experience of our games," union executive board members Andrew Miller and Max Scherzer said in a statement. "Unfortunately, they will also be among those affected by the owner-imposed lockout and the cancellation of games. Through this fund, we want to let them

know that they have our support." The union listed broadcast and concession crews, electricians, ushers, security, transportation and janitors as among those needed for MLB games. "This fund is intended to support workers who are most affected by the MLB-imposed lockout but whose livelihoods have been disregarded by the owners in their efforts to pressure players into accepting an unfair deal," union head Tony Clark said in a statement. □



Tony Clark, second from left, executive director of the baseball players association, appears at a news conference with pitcher Andrew Miller, left, Bruce Meyer, chief union negotiator, second from right, and New York Mets pitcher Max Scherzer, right, Tuesday, March 1, 2022, in Jupiter, Fla. Major League Baseball has canceled opening day.

Associated Press

SUPER Do it Center®

Bo Famia Pa Semper!

**HOT
ITEMS**

OFFER VALID FROM 04 MARCH - 10 MARCH 2022 AND WHILE SUPPLIES LAST.

Weekly SPECIALS

Weekly SPECIALS



SAVE
\$0.46

Rembrandt Cheese Wheel 48+

\$2.11

100 GR



SAVE
\$1.81

EE Ketchup 38oz

\$2.28

Each



SAVE
\$5.14

Plums

\$6.28

Per KG



SAVE
\$3.95

U.S. Procureur Filet Steaks

\$5.71

Per KG



SAVE
\$1.71

Angus Beef
Shoarma Strips

\$15.37

Per KG



SAVE
\$3.95

Flank Steak
Brasil

\$8.57

Per KG



SAVE
\$1.95

Bacon Burger
(Beef)

\$7.71

Per KG



SAVE
\$1.95

Pork
Loinribs

\$7.71

Per KG



SAVE
\$1.66

Chicken Cutsmall
Teriyaki

\$6.85

Per KG



SAVE
\$3.42

Tomatoes
Beefsteak Red

\$3.42

Per KG



SAVE
\$1.14

\$3.99

Potatoes Yellow Yukon 5lbs

Per Bag

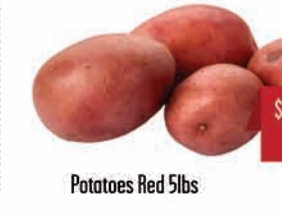


SAVE
\$0.23

\$1.02

Corn Yellow

Each



SAVE
\$2.86

\$3.99

Potatoes Red 5lbs

Per Bag



SAVE
\$1.71

Blueberries 16oz 1pint

Each



SAVE
\$0.29

Extra Belegen Kaas

\$1.37

100 GR



SAVE
\$0.34

Mortadella W/Pistachio

\$1.31

100 GR



SAVE
\$0.17

Pizza Ham (Espina)

\$0.91

100 GR



SAVE
\$0.74

Gwoon Mini Snacks 648gr Doos

\$4.28

Each



SAVE
\$1.31

Sunny D Tangy Original 64oz

\$1.71

Each



SAVE
\$0.86

\$3.71

Ola Magnum Cornetto
Strawberry 6x90ml



SAVE
\$0.23

\$0.79

Kipsate Broodje



SAVE
\$0.18

\$0.28

Kaiser Broodje Wit &
Maanzaad



SAVE
\$2.29

\$7.42

DIY Braided Bracelet
Beads Set



SAVE
\$1.71

\$4.85

DIY Jewelry Designer
Spring of Beads Set



SAVE
\$0.26

\$0.79

Dove Soapbar Beauty
White Soap 100gr

THANKS FOR SHOPPING LOCAL.